

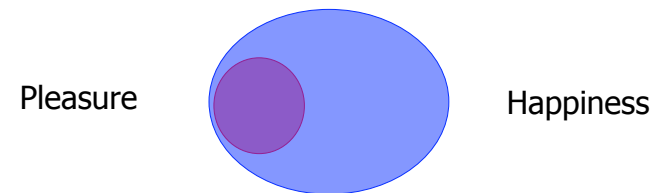
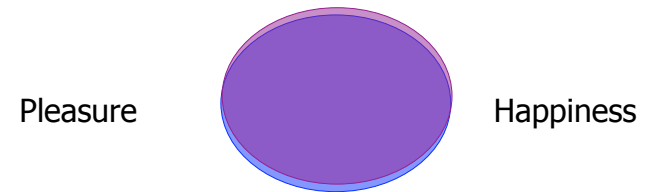
# Objections to Mill's Hedonism

Second objection to Hedonism: Is it true that by happiness we mean pleasure (i.e. that happiness *just is* pleasure)?

- Note: This objection applies to both egoistic and altruistic hedonism.
- It also applies no matter what *kinds* of pleasures are under consideration (i.e., “higher” or “lower” pleasures).

# Nozick's Experience Machine Objection

- If happiness and pleasure are the same thing, then we would want pleasure every time we seek happiness and happiness every time we seek pleasure.
- But if pleasure is a type of happiness then there will be instances of happiness that are not instances of pleasure.



# Nozick's Experience Machine Objection

Nozick challenges the view that by happiness we simply mean pleasure.

- “Suppose there were an experience machine that would give you any experience you desired. Super-duper neuropsychologists could stimulate your brain so that you would think and feel you were writing a great novel, or making a friend, or reading an interesting book. All the time you would be floating in a tank, with electrodes attached to your brain. Should you plug into this machine for life, preprogramming your life experiences? [...] Of course, while in the tank you won't know that you're there; you'll think that it's all actually happening [...] Would you plug in?”

# Nozick's Experience Machine Objection

- In the machine we could have all the pleasure (of any kind) we want, but we are not inclined (on the whole) to want it.
- The conclusion Nozick draws is that our intuitions show us that there is more to happiness than just pleasure.

# Objections to Mill's Act Consequentialism

- An objection to Act Consequentialism: Is the morally right action always only determined by its consequences? What about the nature of the act itself?

# The Organ Donor Objection

The chop-up Quentin case.

- Act A – 5 live, Quentin dies
- Act B – Quentin lives, 5 die

- Act A (killing Quentin to save the 5) would seem to bring about the best state of affairs.
- But it would also strongly seem to not be the moral thing to do. In fact, it seems to be *morally impermissible*.

# The Organ Donor Objection

- **Replies to the Organ Donor Objection:**

1. “Bite the bullet”: A is better (and so much the worse for your intuitions—and the “donor”, Quentin!).
2. The values are not ranked appropriately (i.e. it’s not the best outcome):

Long term consequences must also be considered here.

Since if this were in fact to occur no one would go to the hospital again, the long-term consequences would suggest not performing action A.

# The Organ Donor Objection

- **Response to reply (2) to the Organ Donor Objection.**
- Retell the story but consider a homeless person instead.
  - If we can lose the bad long-term effects of killing, then you must bite the bullet and admit it's okay.





# More stories that question strict Consequentialism

- McCloskey's lynching and rioting crowd.
- Peeping Tom.
- Save the children case.
  - (disrupts special human relationships)

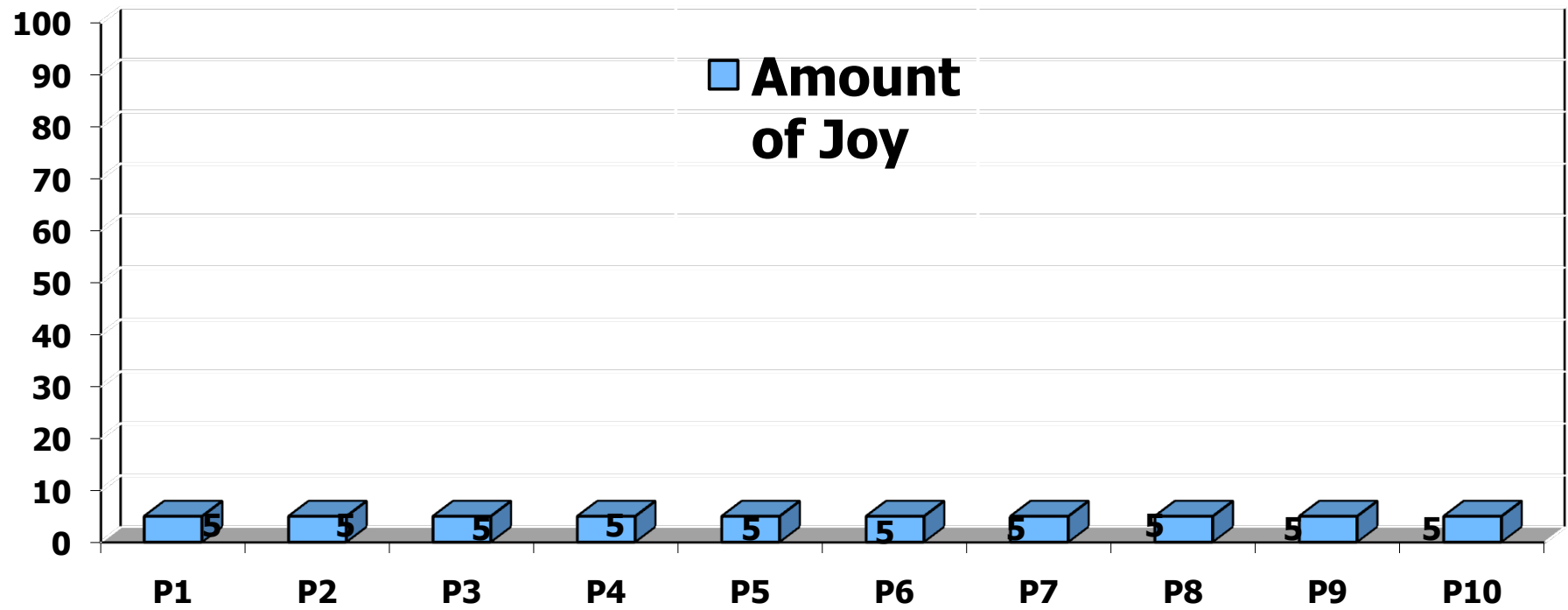
# An Objection to the Principle of Utility

- Principle of Utility: Actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness [or pleasure]; wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness.
  - Therefore we ought to commit the action that maximizes aggregate happiness.
  - But what about situations where other considerations seem more important, like fairness?

# The Utility Monster Objection

- Assume there are 10 people in class and I decide to give away \$100. (Because I'm awesome.)
- It would seem that the best, or at least fairest, state of affairs would be for me to distribute the money evenly, so that each person gets \$10.
- From this you get some utility-\$10 worth-but its not overwhelming. It's a couple of beers, nothing more.
- Let's say that each person got a happiness factor of 5 from receiving the money. The total aggregate happiness, then, is 50.

# The Utility Monster Objection



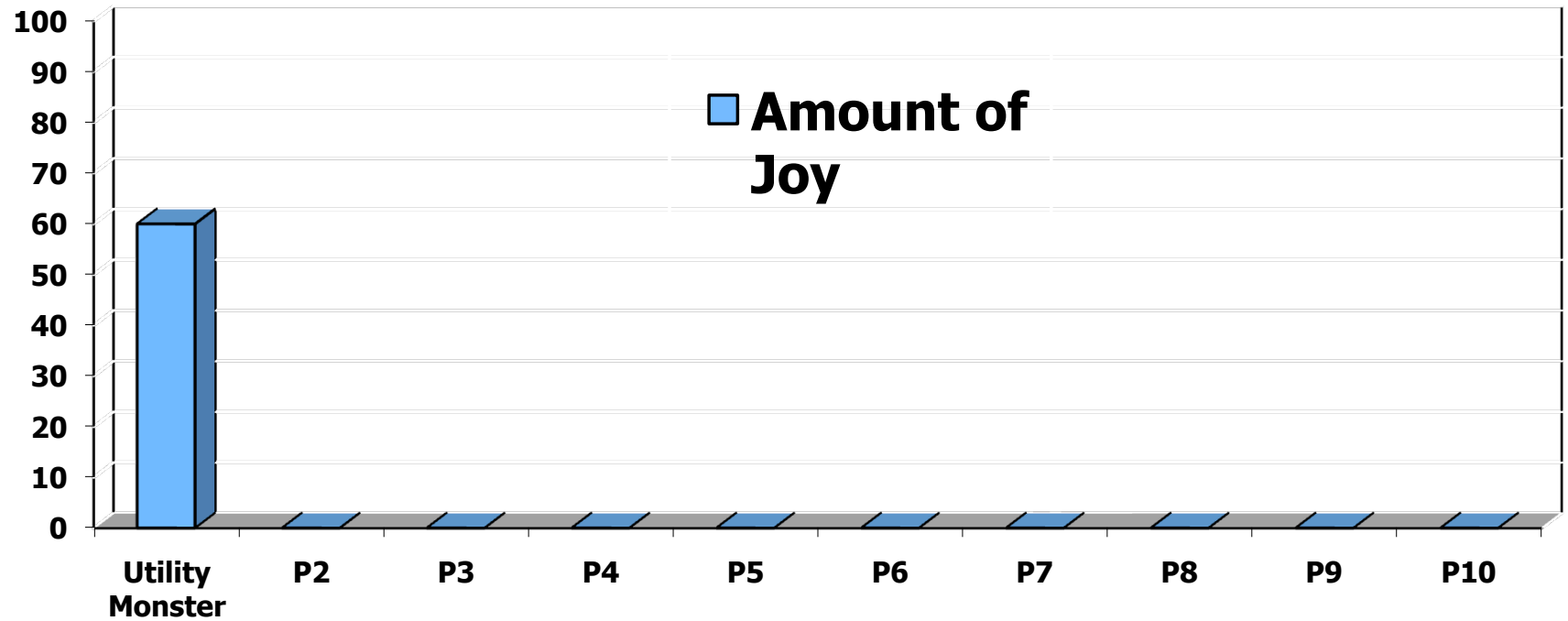
# The Utility Monster Objection

- But now consider when a utility monster is in the group. This is someone who gets an awful lot of happiness when states of affairs favor them. If they were to receive all \$100, they would be happier than the collective happiness of the group.

# The Real Utility Monster ...

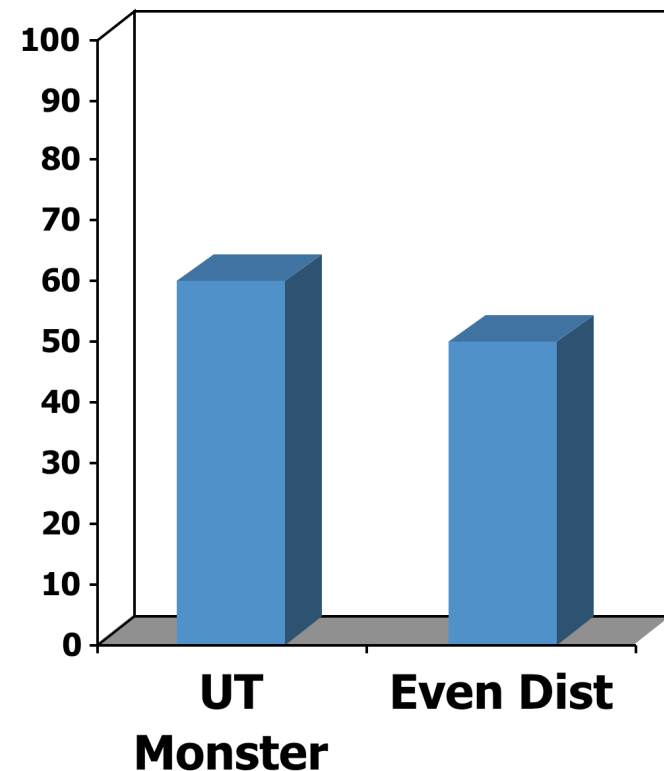


# The Utility Monster Objection



# The Utility Monster Objection

- So, in this example the Utility Monster gets a happiness value of 60 when he gets all the money and the aggregate happiness in this situation is outweighs the happiness in the situation in which the money was evenly distributed to an aggregate value of 50.





# The Utility Monster Objection

- In this example the best state of affairs would seem to be one in which everyone received a fair share, but because that option does not generate the greatest amount of happiness, it is by definition not the best state of affairs.
  - This shows that our intuitions tell us one thing, and the example (which is the theory) tells us another. Our intuitions tell us that a fair distribution also matters to the best state of affairs and not just aggregate happiness.
  - But if that is the case, it is not true that we ought to commit the action that (merely) maximizes aggregate happiness, contrary to the principle of utility.